



## The Montana Career Path: A Framework for Professional Development in Early Childhood Education

Apply to The Practitioner Registry at [www.mtecp.org](http://www.mtecp.org) to be certified at one of these 10 levels.

Level 1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ High School diploma, GED certificate, or HiSet</li> <li>◆ Currently working in an Early Childhood setting*</li> <li>◆ Annual training required for renewal: 24 hours of approved training</li> </ul>
Level 2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ High School diploma, GED certificate, or HiSet</li> <li>◆ 60 hours of approved training in the past 5 years</li> <li>◆ Minimum of 500 hours working in an Early Childhood setting*</li> <li>◆ Annual training required for renewal: 24 hours of approved training</li> </ul>
Level 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Current national Child Development Associate (CDA) credential     –OR–</li> <li>◆ Current National Association for Family Child Care (NAFCC) accreditation and 120 hours of approved training in the past 5 years</li> <li>◆ Minimum of 1000 hours working in an Early Childhood setting*</li> <li>◆ Annual training required for renewal: 24 hours of approved training</li> </ul>
Level 4 Certification
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Current national CDA credential plus at least 20 semester college credits in Early Childhood Education/Child Development**     –OR–</li> <li>◆ Current Montana Child Care Development Specialist Apprenticeship Certificate (college coursework required)**     –OR–</li> <li>◆ One year certificate requiring 30 college credits in Early Childhood Education/Child Development**</li> <li>◆ Minimum of 1000 hours working in an Early Childhood setting*</li> <li>◆ Annual training required for renewal: 24 hours of approved training</li> </ul>
Level 5 Certification
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Associate’s Degree with at least 20 semester college credits in Early Childhood Education/Child Development**</li> <li>◆ Minimum of 1000 hours working in an Early Childhood setting*</li> <li>◆ Annual training required for renewal: 24 hours of approved training</li> </ul>

### Level 6 Certification

- ◆ Bachelor's Degree with at least 20 semester college credits in Early Childhood Education/Child Development\*\*
- ◆ Minimum of 1000 hours working in an Early Childhood setting\*
- ◆ Annual training required for renewal: 24 hours of approved training

### Level 7 Certification

- ◆ Bachelor's Degree with an Associate's Degree in Early Childhood Education OR a minor in Early Childhood Education\*\*
- ◆ Minimum of 1000 hours working in an Early Childhood setting\*
- ◆ Annual training required for renewal: 24 hours of approved training

### Level 8 Certification

- ◆ Bachelor's Degree in Early Childhood Education/Child Development OR Elementary Education with the P-3 teacher endorsement\*\*
- ◆ Minimum of 1000 hours working in an Early Childhood setting\*
- ◆ Annual training required for renewal: 24 hours of approved training

### Level 9 Certification

- ◆ Master's Degree in Early Childhood Education/Child Development\*\*  
-OR-
- ◆ Master's Degree in a related field with emphasis in Early Childhood Education/Child Development\*\*
- ◆ Minimum of 1000 hours working in an Early Childhood setting\*
- ◆ Annual training required for renewal: 24 hours of approved training

### Level 10 Certification

- ◆ Doctorate in Early Childhood Education/Child Development\*\*  
-OR-
- ◆ Doctorate in a related field with Early Childhood Education/Child Development emphasis\*\*
- ◆ Minimum of 1000 hours working in an Early Childhood setting\*
- ◆ Annual training required for renewal: 24 hours of approved training

\*Early Childhood settings are programs offering services to young children and their families including administrative and teacher/caregiving roles, or programs that conduct training or education in early childhood.

\*\*All credits and degrees must be from regionally accredited colleges and universities.

Early Childhood college courses (verified by ECP) count for annual training hours (1 semester credit = 15 hours).

Visit [www.mtecp.org](http://www.mtecp.org) for more information about The Early Childhood Project.



**montana early childhood project**

Updated January 2017